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Eight-String Round Edge Leather Braid, Part 1

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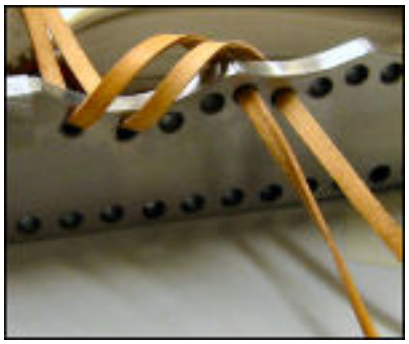
- Skills and guides - DYI, Making things. -



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Description :

A derivation of a Bruce Grant edge lace pattern that mimics Eight-String braiding. This pattern uses two strings of kangaroo lace.

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For this article it is used to braid a leather handle on a unique Gene Ingram fixed blade pocket knife. This pictorial article is split into two parts due to a great number of images.

Edge lace using 1/8" precut kangaroo strings can be used on any number of projects, from knife sheaths to wallets. In this article I am going to apply an edge lace that looks much like eight-plait round braid on the edge of a knife handle. The knife is a unique design by Gene Ingram for which I apply the edge lace.

This edge lace follows the pattern found on Plate 121 of Bruce Grant's excellent ***Encyclopedia of Rawhide and Leather Braiding*** , an essential leather crafters text.

This pattern can be done with one string or two, and I have modified it slightly for this knife handle.

Edge lace is generally very easy to do. Lacing steel presents some difficulty with patterns as the holes do not "give" at all and at most allow 4 passes of lace per hole. I have found a pattern that both looks good, is durable and requires a maximum of 2 passes per hole.

Materials

Kangaroo lace, 1/8" wide, 2 five foot strings, well greased.

Two lacing needles, I prefer Tandy round brass needles but traditional flat lacing needles can be used.

Bruce Grant's Encyclopedia

Belting awl

Sharp knife

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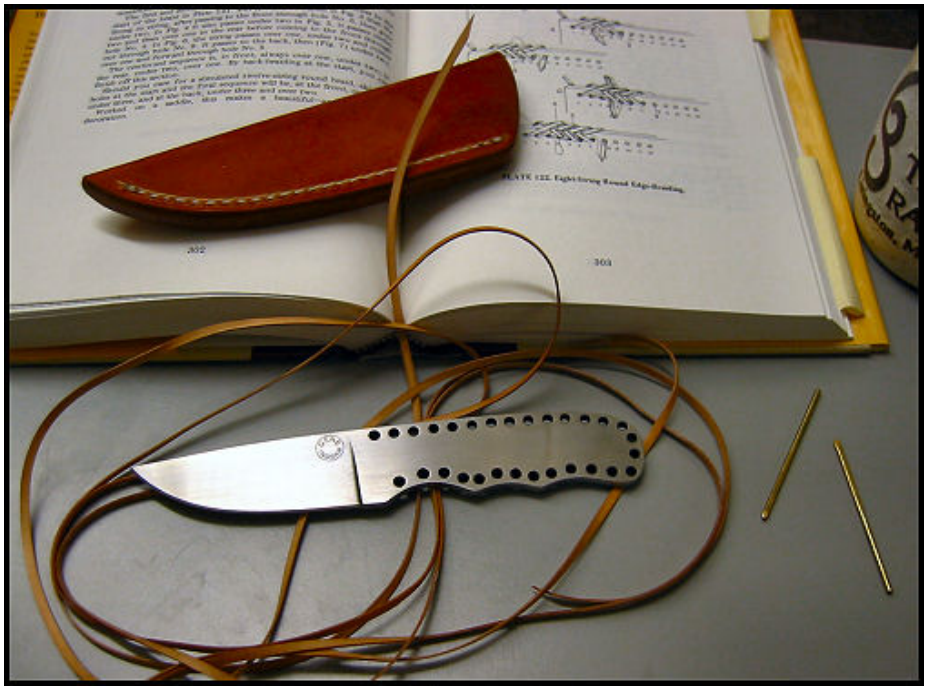


Grease and inspect the lace. I use a very generous 5 feet of lace per string. Taper each end of the strings.

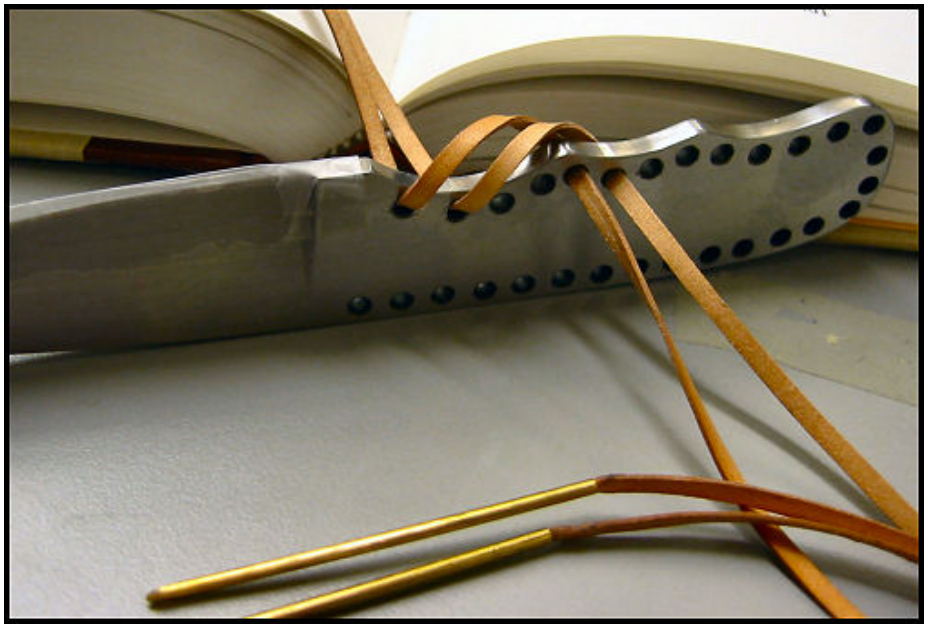
Twist a lacing needle on one end of each string.

Tape sharp edge of the knife.

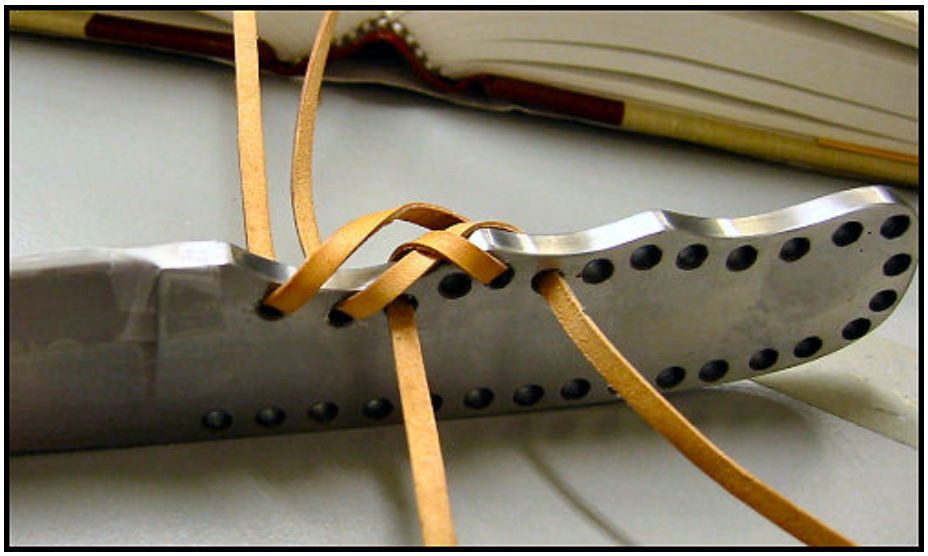
For this article I am going to refer to the string in hole 1 as the first string, and the string in hole 2 as the second string.

I start lacing on the bottom edge of the knife handle.

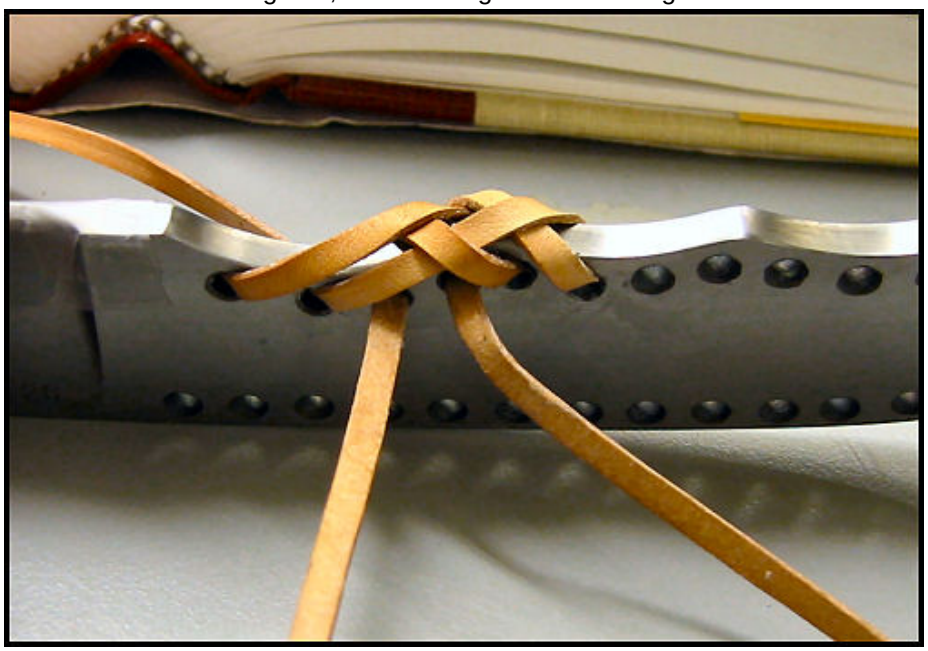
Start string one in **hole 1** from the back side of the knife. Leave about 16 inches on that side. Do the same with the second string but go through **hole 2**. You now have about 4 feet of string coming towards you and these long ends have the needles on them.



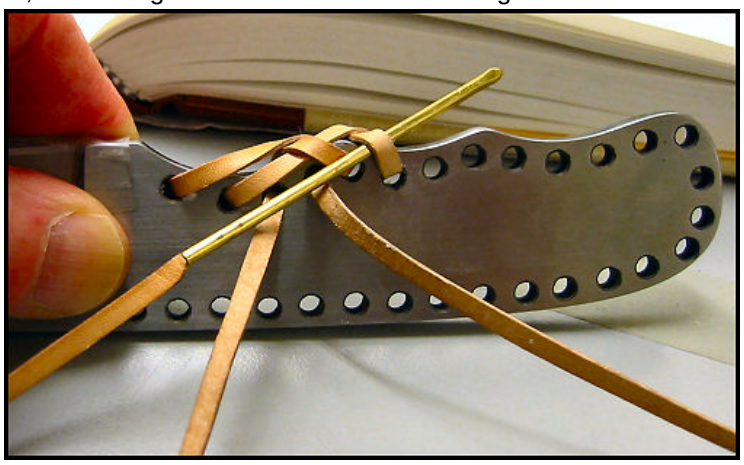
Take string one over the knife and from the back side into **hole 5**. Take string two over and from the back side into **hole 6**.



Now come back towards the left with string one, OVER string two and through **hole3**.



Take string two UNDER itself, over string one one the back and through **hole4**.



Now take string one back to the right OVER itself and UNDER string two.

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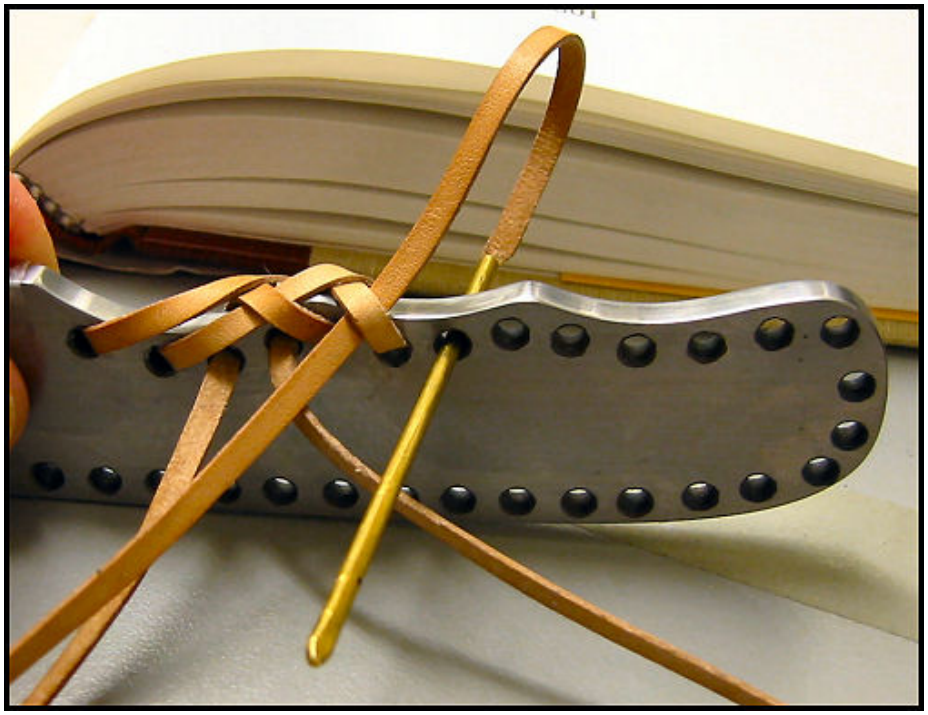
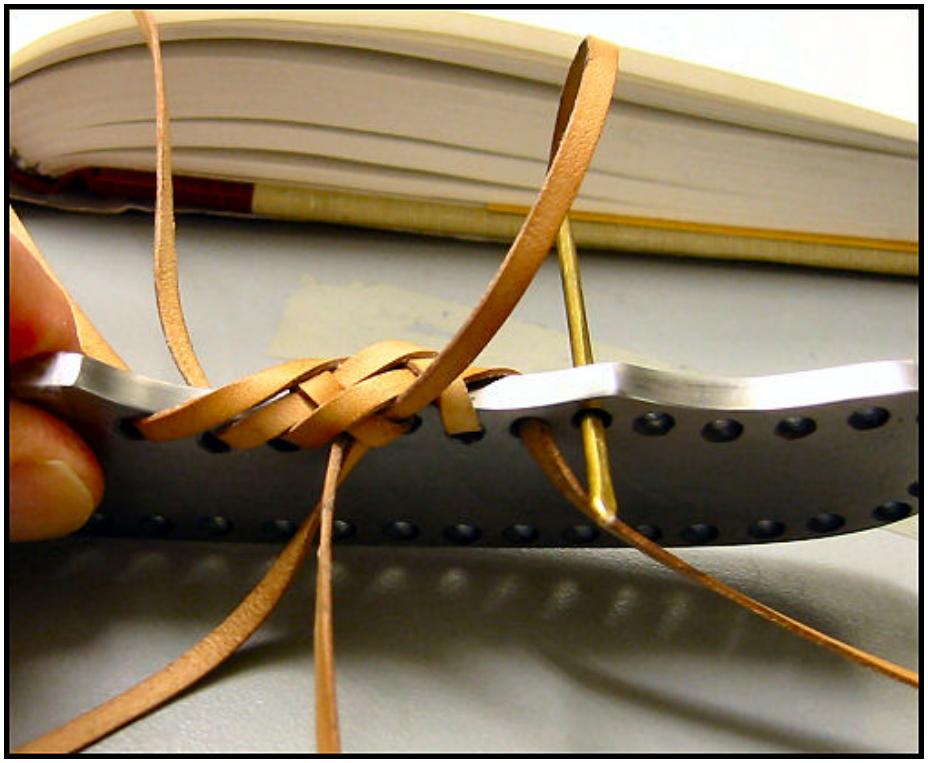


The loop around back and through **hole 7**.



Take string two UNDER and OVER, then from the back through **hole 8**. This is the pattern that will be followed all the way around the knife.

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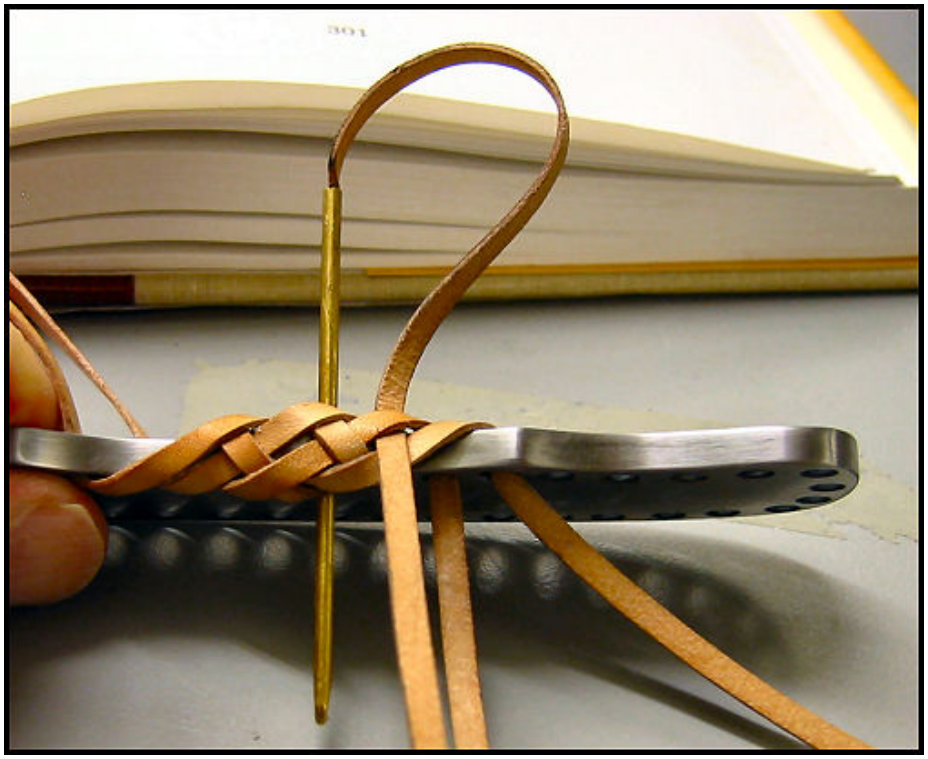

Now the OVER, UNDER pattern for string one is always going to be followed. So over, under and through **hole 5**.

And the UNDER, OVER pattern for string two will always be followed. So under, over, and through **hole 6**.

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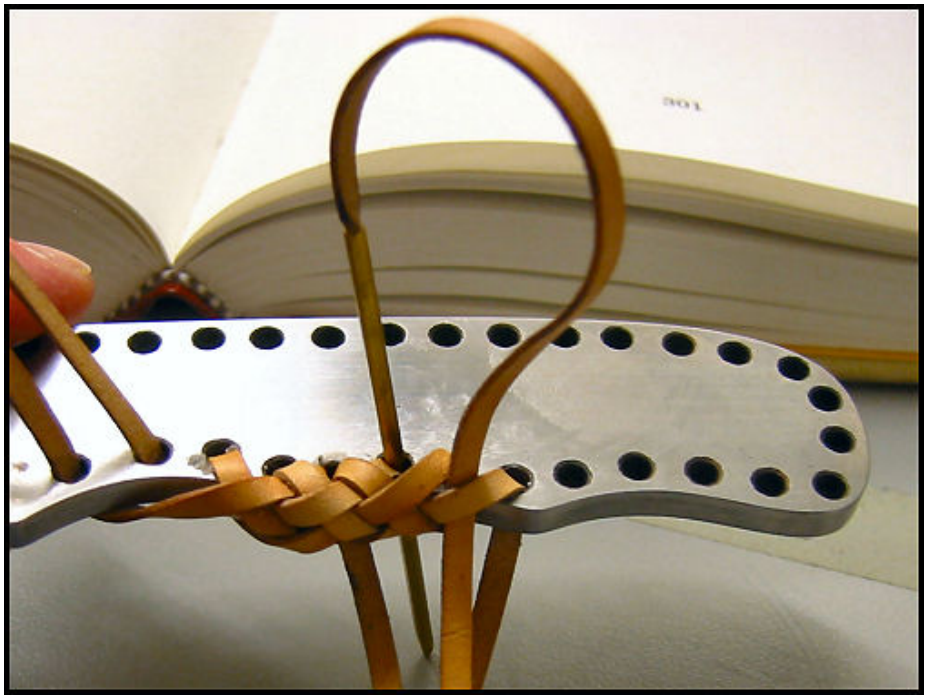
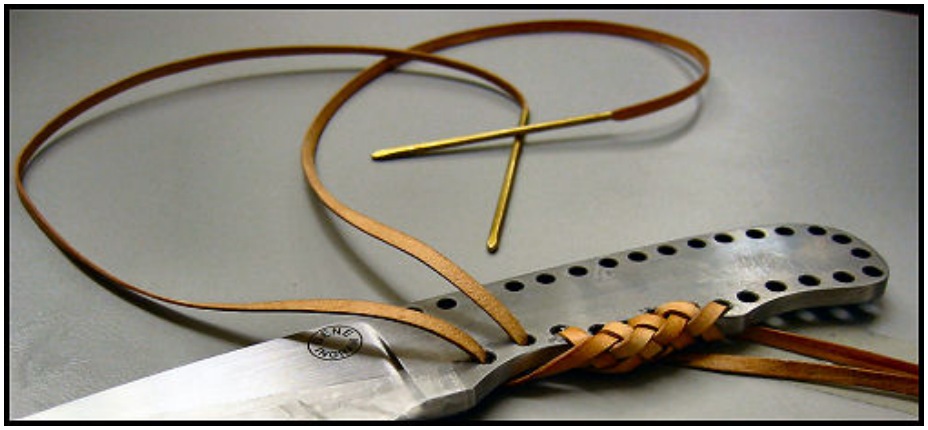


For clarity through **hole 6**

And then for clarity the two strings ready to head back to the right.



At this point go back to the beginning holes and begin a back lace. Move the lacing needles to the tag ends and again follow the pattern.

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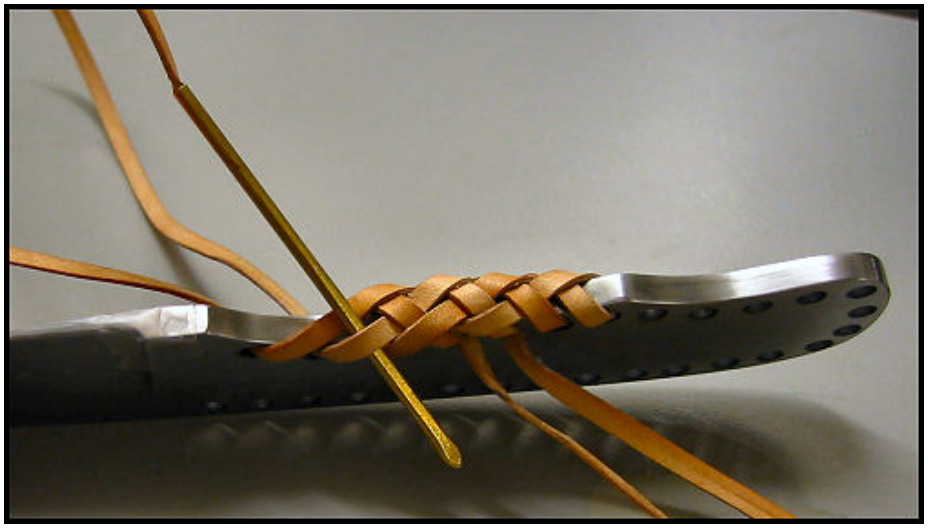
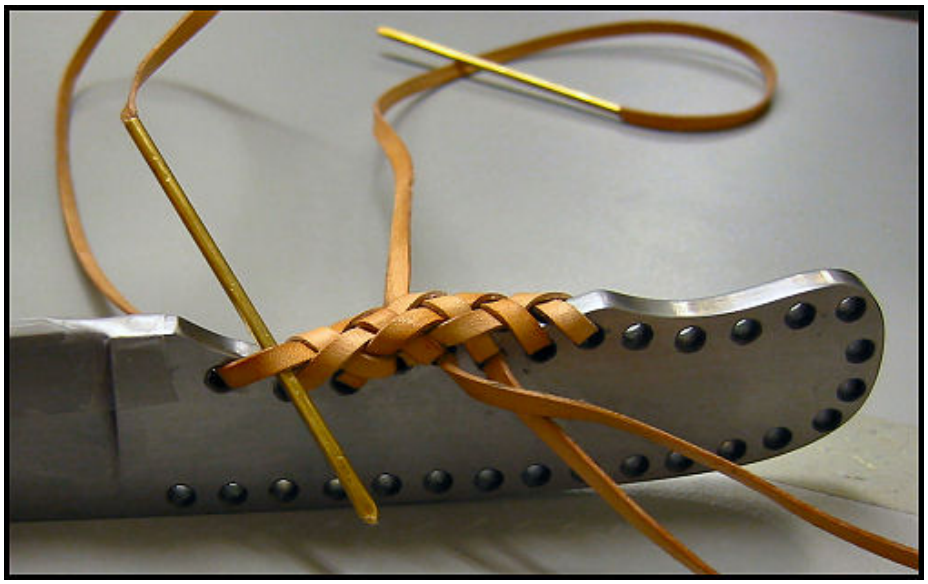


Start with string two, and come back OVER and UNDER then through

hole 4 from the front.



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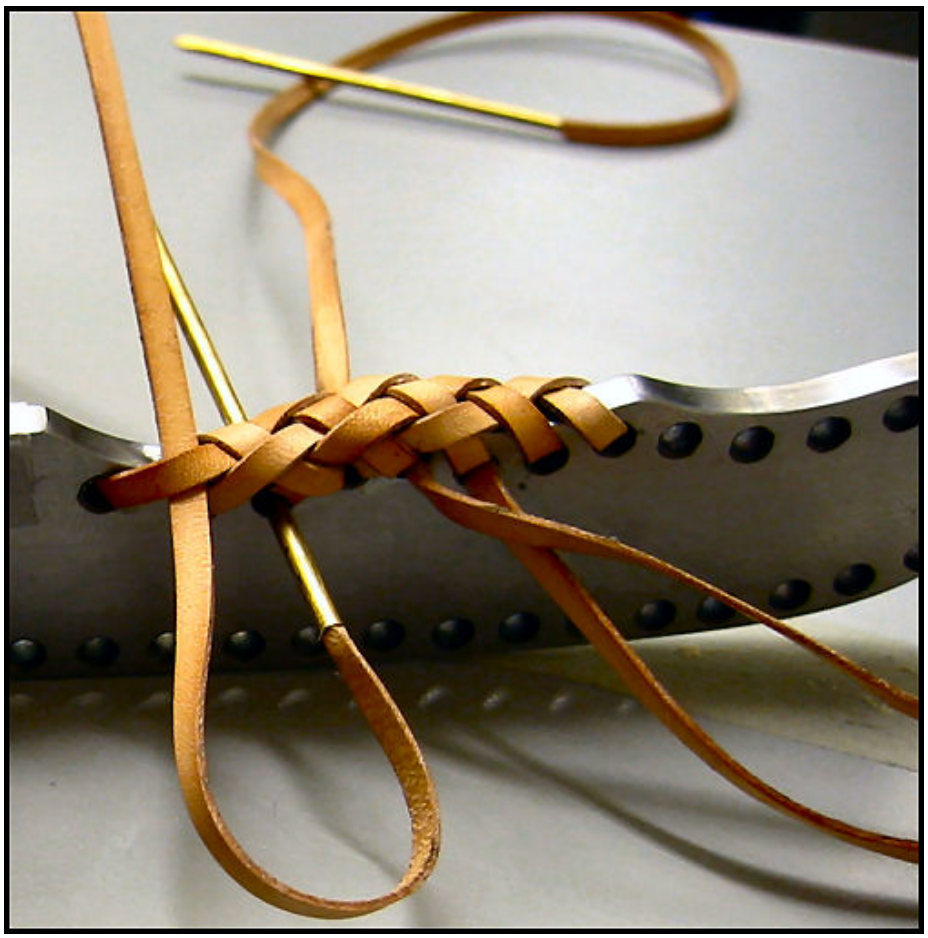
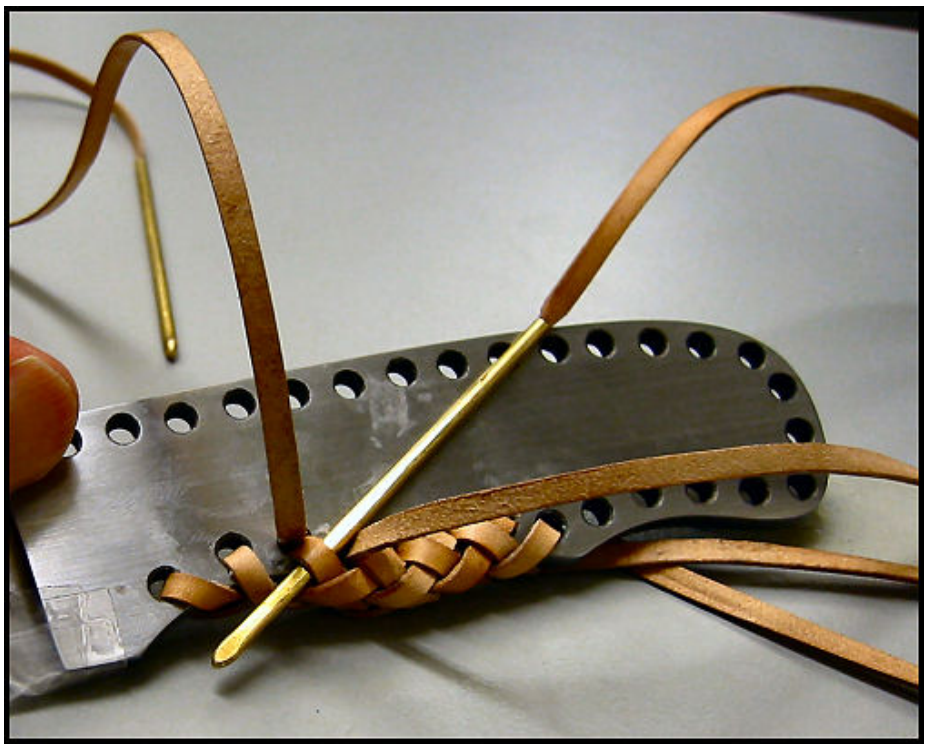
String one comes UNDER and then



through **hole 3** from the front.



String two then goes under the lace in **hole 3** and then

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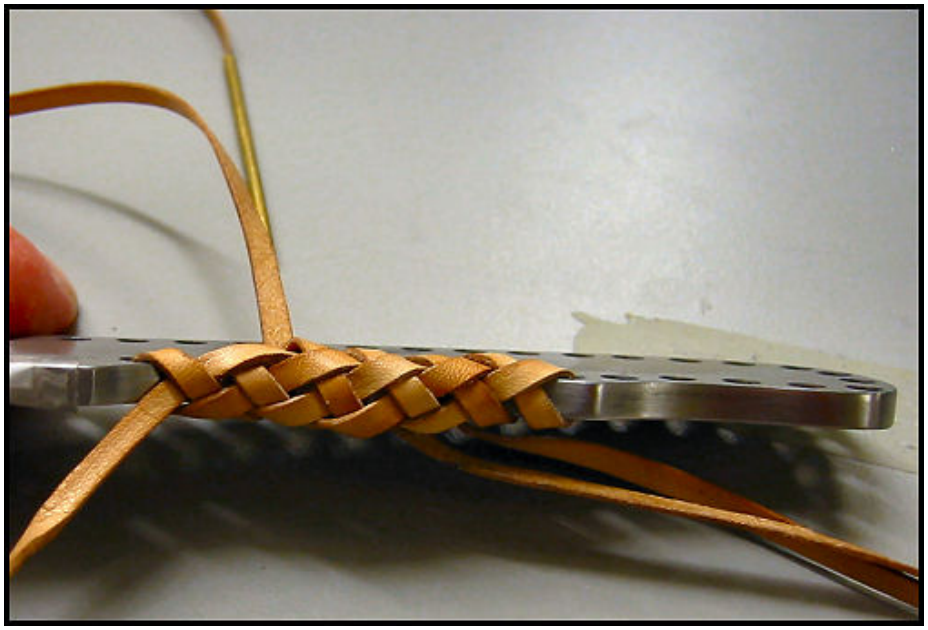
Over, under the lace on the spine of the knife. Much harder to type than do.



The pattern can clearly be followed by inspection of where the laces must go.

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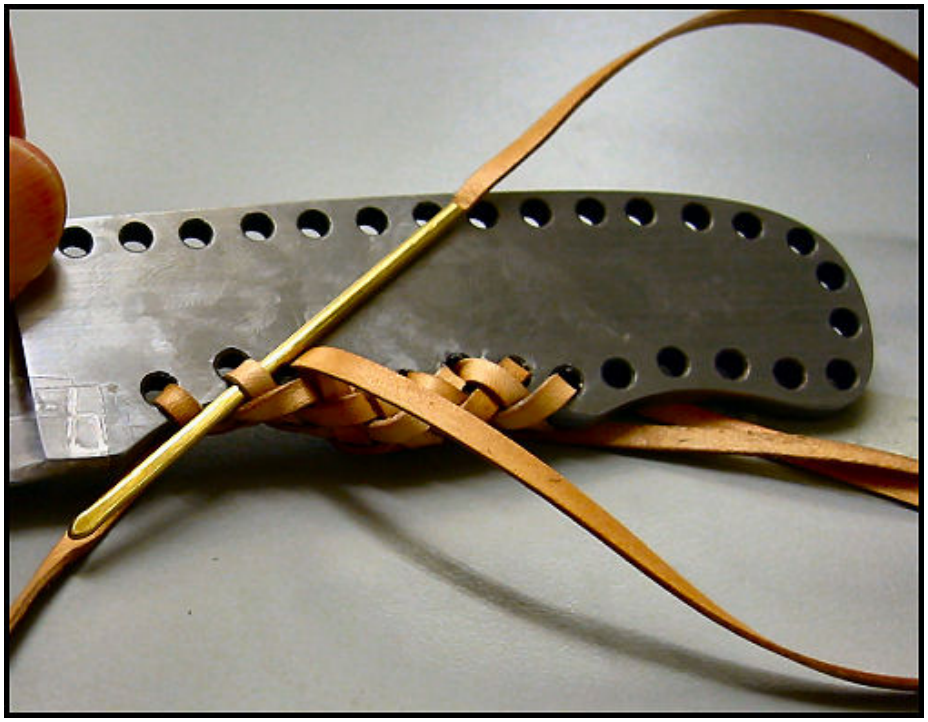
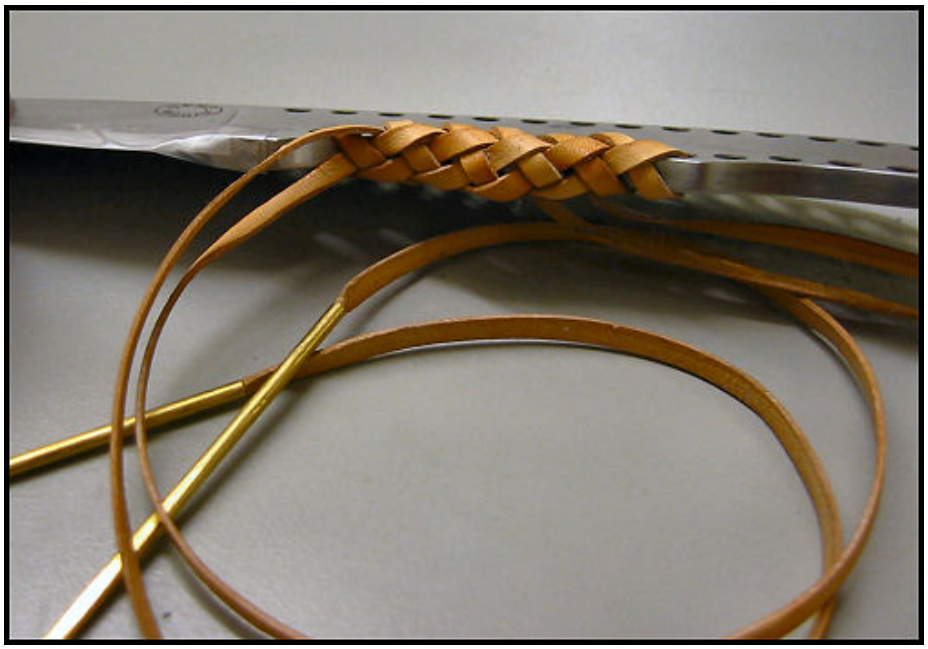


String one is now weaved back to the front also.



Now the pattern has just about run out of holes.

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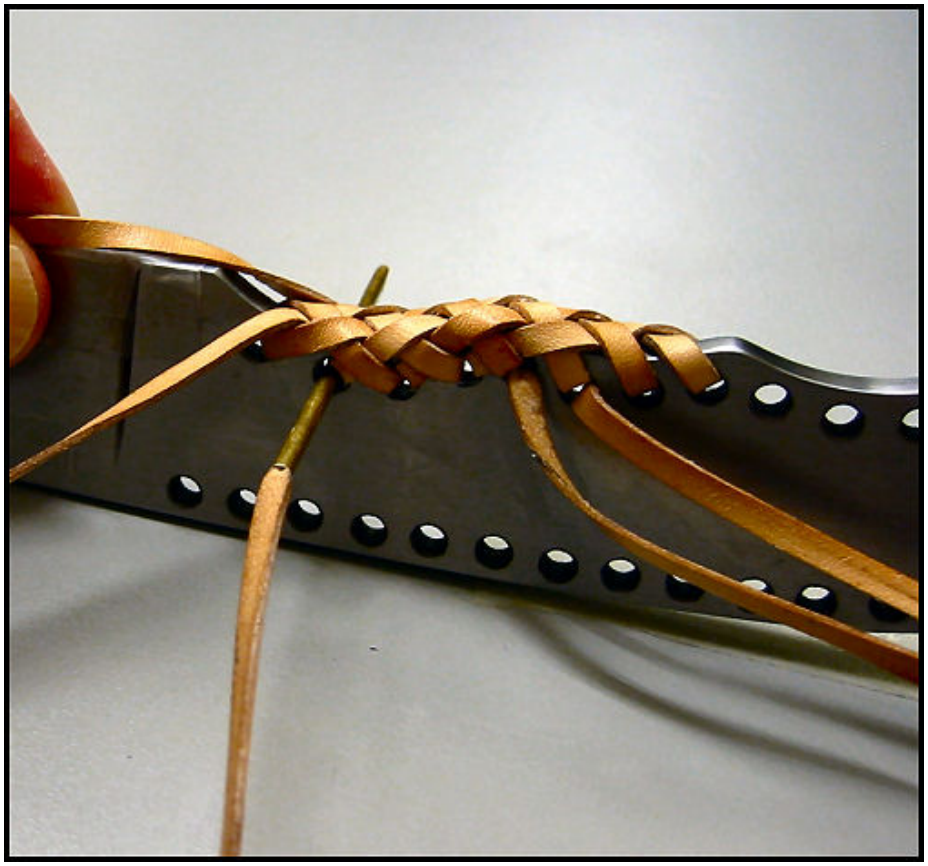
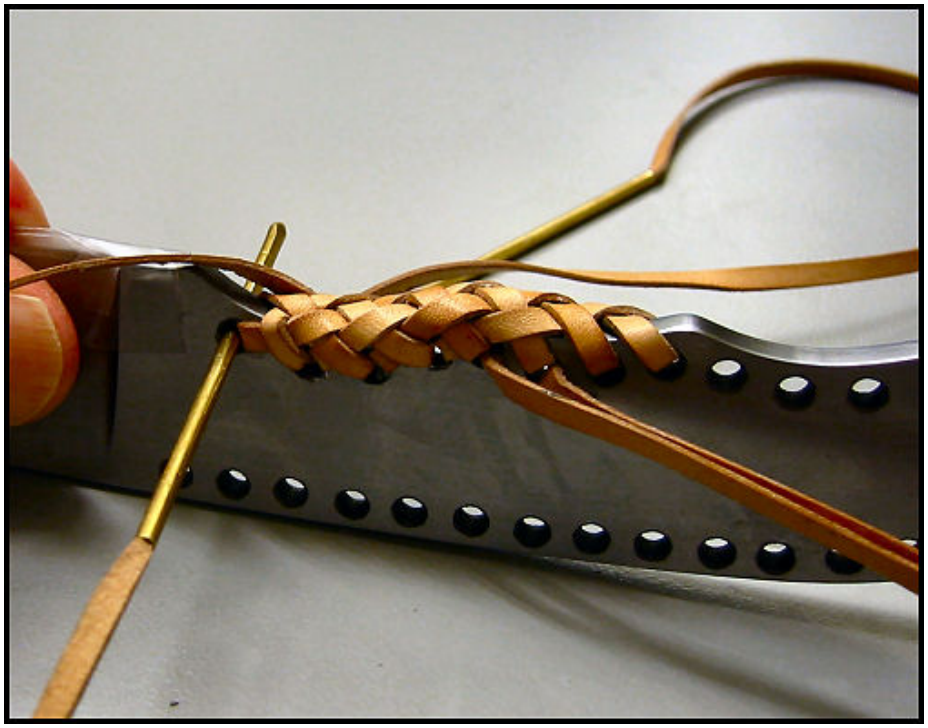


But take string two over and through **hole 2**.



And string one over and through **hole 1**. Now the article is going to leave this at this point and finish this at the end. In reality I laced this all but was unhappy with the look so I unlaced it and redid it at the end....so now back to the main lace.

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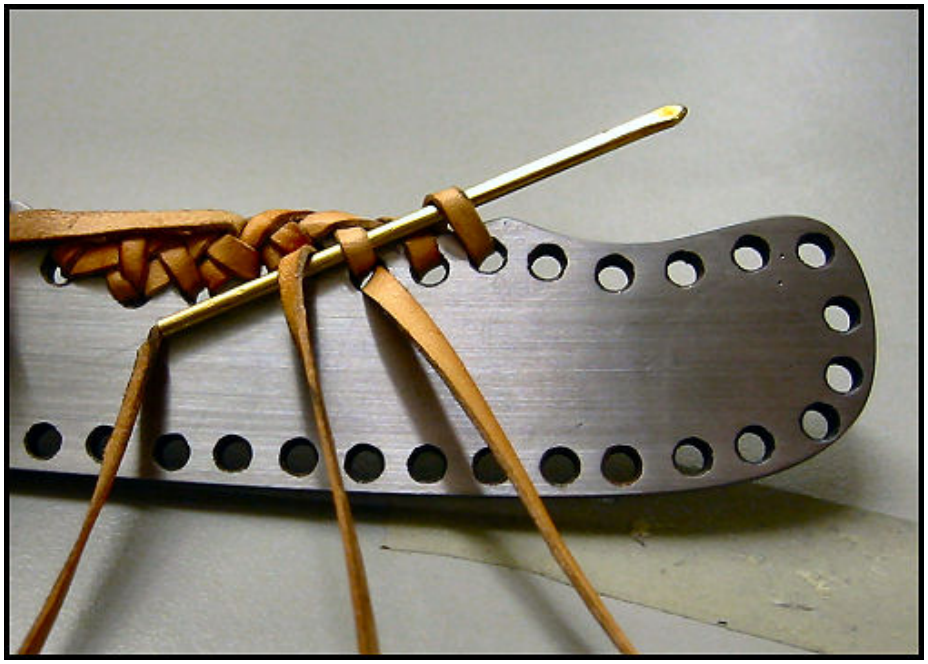
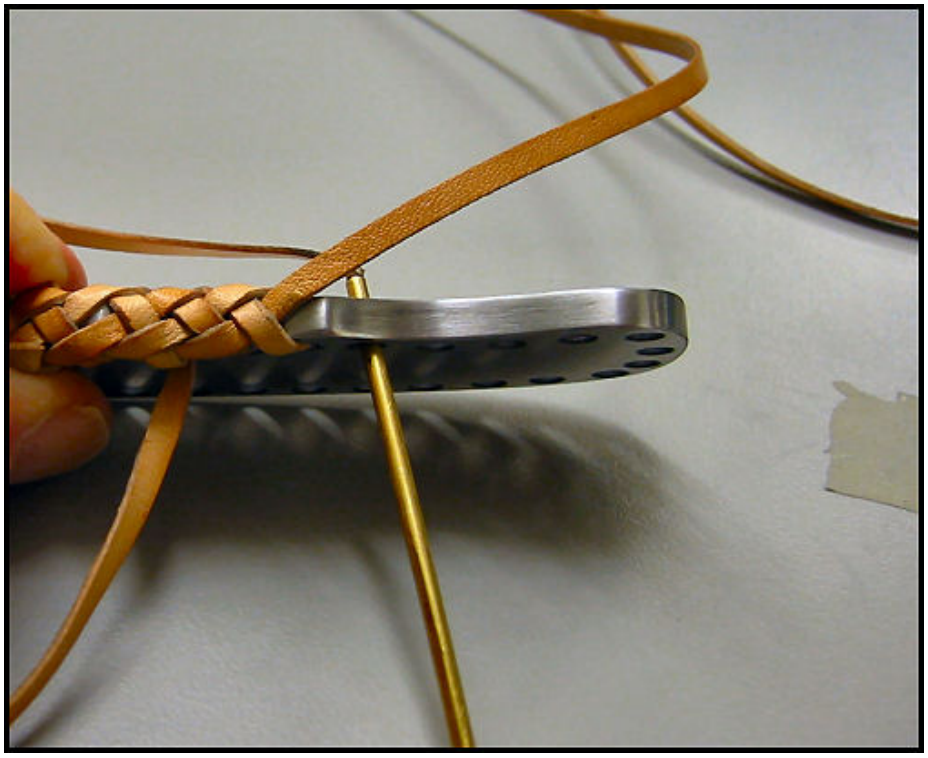


Put the lacing needles back on the main strings. At this point inspect all well to make sure the pattern is correct. Take your belting awl and tighten anything that needs tightening. This lace pattern is very easy to keep tight, but the beginning is always a bit loose.

Take string one, and it is now always going to go under, over, under then through. In this image I show this all as one needle pass, but I always make it as two. I use the belting awl to make way for the pass beside the steel, then gently pull the leather through, then make the next under and through in a second step. If the lace is real tight these double passes will stretch the lace too much so go easy.



Then through the next hole.

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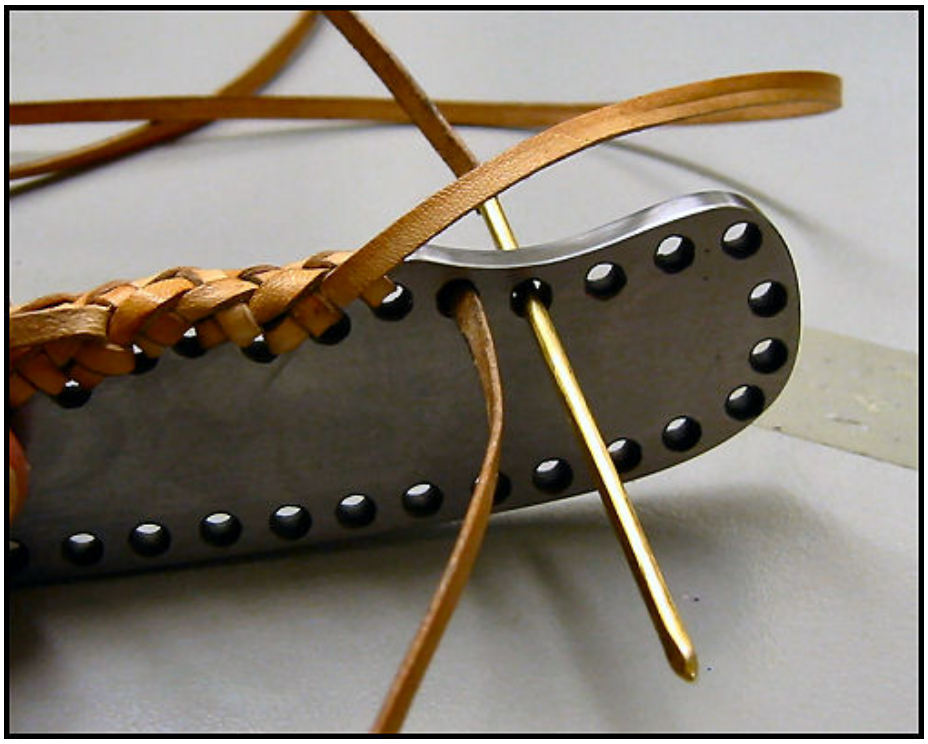
String two will go under, over then through. This I also do in two steps.



And through.

Keep going with this pattern. The points on the handle and the butt curve will make some of the leather pattern a bit

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more difficult but it is not too hard to keep to the pattern. The sharp curve of the butt presents some difficulty but a few tips follow in....

PART 2

Post-scriptum :

Version 1.0 6/21/2007 Images

Version 1.5 6/21/2007 Text and Fini

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